of views among the State Governments and the sensitivity of this issue, it was decided that it would be necessary to discuss this further and evolve a consensus before alternatives are considered by the NDC.

Gap between rich and poor

1336. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the gap between the rich and poor persons in rural and urban areas has increased in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are considering seriously to narrow the gap; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) From the two latest estimates of consumer expenditure data obtained for the years 1993-94 (NSS 50th Round) and 1999-2000 (NSS 55th Round), it is observed that the ratio of per capita consumption of the poor to non-poor increased from 45% in 1993-94 to 47% in 1999-2000 (on the basis of 30-day recall) in rural areas. In urban areas, however, it decreased from 37% to 36% during the same period. This is due to the fact that a high proportion of urban poor are first generation migrants with few assets.

(c) and (d) The gap between the poor and non-poor is attempted to be effected through acceleration of economic growth and direct income generation of the poor through employment, income generating programmes and assets-building.